SAO Advanced Training Automation Workshop (SAM-TA)

By

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"Computers make it easier to do a lot of things, but most of the things they make it easier to do don't need to be done." Andy Rooney

Security Assistance Officers (SAOs) have been using the SAO Training Management System (SAO TMS) for years to print travel orders, generate reports summarizing their host nations training, and automate other training tasks.

The training management system has the ability to generate hundreds of different FMS, IMET, FMF, and INL. reports and forms. But how do you make TMS do the things YOUR office needs done?

DISAM offers training during the O-course for new SAOs. Until now, however, there has been no detailed advanced training on how to get the most out of the training management software.

To correct that situation, DISAM is creating an advanced training automation workshop. The workshop is designed for security assistance office staff with significant security assistance training management experience and practice using security assistance office TMS. The Defense Institute of Security Assistance Management anticipates that workshop graduates will be able to provide significant assistance to other security assistance training managers within their office or even unified command.

The Defense Institute Security Assistance Management will prototype the workshop this fall (18-22 September 2000), and build the curriculum based on that prototype.

The workshop will be offered yearly starting in FY 2001. The FY 2001 course will be taught 12-16 February 2001.

"Computers are useless. They can only give you answers." Pablo Picasso

Specifically, the workshop will focus on three major topic areas:

- **Advanced SAO TMS Techniques**: One half day of lecture/discussion/exercise on getting the most out of your existing software. Specific topics will include custom reports, summary reports, default ITOs, and program originator profiles.

- **Microsoft Access and Training Management**: Three and one half days of lecture/exercise on building a local office database that links to SAO TMS. The focus will be on building Microsoft Access forms, tables, queries and reports to link into SAO TMS to program unique functions for your country's program. Basic programming techniques and module design

will be introduced. Students will build a database that they can take home to their office to use upon completion of the course.

- **Security Assistance Automation** topics of interest: one half day of the workshop will consist of guest speakers (scattered throughout the week) addressing topics such as SAO automation support, DSCA automation plans, military department automation, and DSAMS.

"If computers get too powerful, we can organize them into a committee -- that will do them in." Unknown

Seminar participation will be limited to 20 students. All students must be U.S. government employees who are previous SAM-O or SAM-F graduates and have over one year of security assistance training management experience and significant practice using the Security Assistance Officer Training Management System (SAO TMS). (Prerequisites may be waived by DISAM/DI upon written request). You may pre-register by submitting a DD 1556 to DISAM/DAS, see the DISAM web page for instructions: http://disam.osd.mil. The first 20 qualified students submitting a DD 1556 to DISAM will receive seats in the February workshop.

About the Author

Mark Ahles is currently an Associate Professor of Security Assistance at DISAM. His main areas of focus are international training management and related software development. He has previously worked at the National Security Agency, Air Force Logistics Command, and the Air Force Security Assistance Center. Mark. Ahles holds a reserve commission of Major. He is currently assigned to the Ohio Army National Guard as the Defense Security Cooperation Agency's National Guard Programs Officer. Mark Ahles has completed Bachelors and Masters Degrees in Computer Science and is presently a Ph.D. student at the Union Institute researching National Security Computer and Information Systems.